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REMARKS

This reply is fully responsive to the Office Action dated December 11, 2006, and is filed within six (6) months of the mailing date of the office action. The method of payment and any necessary fees due in connection therewith is enclosed.

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Objection/Rejection Summary

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action of December 11, 2007, wherein:

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A. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 19-21, 23-25, 26, 31, 34, 36-39, 41-44, 52-55, 57-59, 64, and 67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters '266 in view of Matsuoka '345;

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B. Claims 29 and 62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters in view of Matsuoka, and further in view of Shepherd '963;

C. Claims 32, 33, 65, and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters in view of Matsuoka and Shepherd;

D. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10, 19-21, 23, 25-26, 29, 31, 34, 36-39, 41, 43, 44, 52-55, 57, 59, 62, 64, and 67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Greenfield et al. in view of Matsuoka;

E. Claim 68 was allowed; and

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F. Claims 11-18, 27, 30, 45-51, 60,61, and 63 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form, including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

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A. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 19-21, 23-25, 26, 31, 34, 36-39, 41-44, 52-55, 57-59, 64, and 67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters in view of Matsuoka.

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Claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 19-21, 23-25, 26, 31, 34, 36-39, 41-44, 52-55, 57-59, 64, and 67 have been cancelled. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and provide for timely allowance of the pending claims.

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B. Claims 29 and 62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters in view of Matsuoka, and further in view of Shepherd.

10 Claims 29 and 62 have been cancelled. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and provide for timely allowance of the pending claims.

C. Claims 32, 33, 65, and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters in view of Matsuoka and Shepherd.

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Claims 32, 33, 65, and 66 have been cancelled. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and provide for timely allowance of the pending claims.

20 D. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10, 19-21, 23, 25-26, 29, 31, 34, 36-39, 41, 43, 44, 52-55, 57, 59, 62, 64, and 67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Greenfield et al. in view of Matsuoka.

25 Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10, 19-21, 23, 25-26, 29, 31, 34, 36-39, 41, 43, 44, 52-55, 57, 59, 62, 64, and 67 have been cancelled. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and provide for timely allowance of the pending claims.

Allowed Claims

E. Claim 68 was allowed.

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The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the statement of allowed subject matter and respectfully requests that the Examiner provide for timely allowance and issuance of the remaining claims.

5 F. Claims 11-18, 27, 30, 45-51, 60,61, and 63 were objected to as being dependent
upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten into independent
form, including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Applicant directs the Examiner to the amended claims included herewith. As noted
10 in the claims. Claims 11-18, 27, 30, 45-51, 60,61, and 63 have been rewritten into
independent form, including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner provide for timely allowance
and issuance of the pending claims.

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CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully submits that in light of the above amendment/remarks, all claims are now in allowable condition. The Applicant thus respectfully requests timely allowance of all of the pending claims.

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Any claim amendments that are not specifically discussed in the above remarks are not made for patentability purposes, and it is believed that the claims would satisfy the statutory requirements for patentability without the entry of such amendments. Rather, these amendments have only been made to increase claim readability, to improve grammar, and to reduce the time and effort required of those skilled in the art to clearly understand the scope of the claim language. Furthermore, any new claims presented above are of course intended to avoid the prior art, but are not intended as replacements or substitutes of any cancelled claims. They are simply additional specific statements of inventive concepts described in the application as originally filed.

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Further, it should be noted that amendment(s) to any claim is intended to comply with the requirements of the Office Action in order to elicit an early allowance, and is not intended to prejudice Applicants' rights or in any way to create an estoppel preventing Applicant from arguing allowability of the originally filed claim in further off-spring applications.

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In the event the Examiner wishes to discuss any aspect of this response, or believes that a conversation with either Applicant or Applicant's representative would be beneficial, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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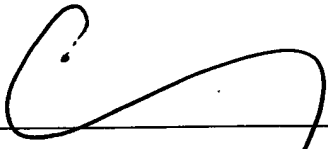
The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required or credit overpayment to the attached credit card form. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of

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5 the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed. The petition fee due
in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 50-2738 if a credit card
form has not been included with this correspondence, or if the credit card could not be
charged.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cary Tope-McKay
Registration No. 41,350
Tel.: (310) 589-8158

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